1: Titiev E-5 (1948) 1951 SG4 Araucanians SG4
Mapuche-Huilliche



*wenumapu* ("high land"). This is also one of the regions to which go the spirits of the dead, but no explicit connection is made between the two sets of ideas. It is the moon which, because of its supposed control of catamenia, is looked upon as the special god of children. When she wants a woman to become pregnant, she causes her menses to stop.[2] There is also a belief in an amorphous spirit of fertility, *choyülchefe*, which controls germination and reproduction in all living things. Together with a feminine counterpart, *choyülchefe* is supposed to dwell in bodies of water such as springs, pools, or cataracts. He is also associated with bees, which return in force each season when germination reaches a peak. *Choyülchefe* is not represented in any concrete form and is not the object of prayers for fertility.

An ambivalent attitude exists toward sexual relations during menstruation. Such relations are forbidden on the grounds that both parties will be subject to disease; yet intercourse at these times, it is thought, will very likely result in impregnation. There is also a belief that women who regularly enjoy orgasms are more likely to have offspring.

Although children are usually greatly desired, there are special situations wherein pregnant women prefer to have abortions. Most frequently these cases involve unwed girls whose lovers refuse to marry them. If enough hard feeling has been aroused, such a girl may resort to a *machi*. The *machi* gives her a strong infusion of cinnamon bark, the bark of the *pucha* tree,[3] and a plant called *tropa* or *trupa*,[4] which is commonly known as devil's tobacco, and which was, in point of fact, formerly smoked by the Araucanians. If this potion proves too strong for the patient, she is given an antidote of *chillko* ("fuchsia"), and a kind of ginger (Spanish, *maqui;* Mapuche, Kul-on).

[2] Cf. Latcham, 1924, p. 626. Latcham, 1909, p. 347, described the moon as the wife of the sun.

[3] The Spanish term is *patagua*, which Augusta (1916, I: 172), identified as *Myrceugenia pitra* Berg, family Myrtaceae.

[4] Identified by Augusta (*op. cit.*, pp. 236–37) as *Lobelia tupa* L., family Campanulaceae.

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## ADOLESCENCE

Latcham made repeated references to totemic or tribal initiations, but he gave no details, and it is hard to tell whether he was dealing with a custom that once prevailed or with a hypothesis.[23] Certainly, no practice currently exists that in any way resembles a formal recognition of adulthood. The transition from boyhood to manhood is completely unmarked and gradual and is accomplished as a boy assumes more and more adult tasks and begins to engage in sexual relations.

In the past an adolescent boy was given a pair of severe tests to show his all-round development. At the age of eleven or twelve he was mounted on horseback and sent alone for a visit of several days at the house of a friendly chief. The latter spent much time with him, conversed with and questioned him on a variety of topics, and took mental note of his deportment and replies. Soon after the lad's return home, the chief secretly gave his father a full and critical evaluation of the boy's behavior. About five years later, a youth was expected to give a public demonstration of his oratorical ability and the power of his memory.[24]

Girls, too, are said formerly to have been subjected to an initiation on reaching puberty, and there is a likelihood that the custom persists in areas near the Cordilleras,[25] but in the region in which I worked no mention of such a trait was made. The beginning of a girl's menstrual cycle receives no public mention. On the contrary, unmarried women keep their periods secret from all but their mothers, and wives from all but their husbands. It is even said that women wear no protective pads, although they may place an extra mat in bed, because lack of privacy in a *ruka* would betray their condition. Garments or bedclothes that absorb the discharge are promptly laundered with exceptional care. Unwillingness to reveal the menarche, to resort to menstrual huts, or to wear protective pads, stems

[23] Latcham, 1924, p. 467, *et passim*.
[24] Housse, 1939, pp. 261 ff.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 257.

1: Titiev E-5 (1948) 1961 SG4 Araucanians SG4
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841 754 not from indifference but rather from the fear that a woman can be easily bewitched if an enemy gets hold of some of the discharge.

841 538 There is a simple folk tale that is supposed to explain the origin of catamenia. A long time ago, a young woman went out in the dark to urinate against the slope of a hill. Just then the moon rose and saw her vagina. The moon regarded this as a lack of respect and punished her by causing her to menstruate every twenty eight days. The term for menstruation is *pekūyewn*, "caught by the moon," *kūyen*, and the phases of the moon are figuratively likened to a woman's life cycle. Thus, a new moon is a virgin, a full moon a pregnant female, and a [342] waning moon is a sterile old woman.[25] The close connection thought to exist between the moon and fertility helps to explain why intercourse with a menstruant is supposed to be likely to cause pregnancy.

[25] Cf. Latcham, 1924, p. 626.

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
SG4 Araucanians SG4
Chile



Cognizance, however, is taken of puberty: a prepuberty boy is spoken of as "a growing-up boy" and is addressed as "little man"; after his voice has changed, he is addressed as "young man" (weche wentru) and is spoken of as "single man" or "unmarried man." A girl before her first menstruation is spoken of as "a growing-up girl" and is addressed as "little woman"; after first menstruation as "young woman" (üllche) and also as "unmarried woman" or "single woman" (fücha pəra). Only an occasional mother instructs a daughter regarding first menstruation and motherhood; in instances an older sister of the girl has been known to do so. Quoting Araucanian women: "We do nothing for a girl when she is that way for the first time. Since the mother has said nothing to her girl about it, the girl gets frightened and does not tell anyone; a girl is ashamed to tell about it. I know a girl who was so frightened that she did not get sick again for two years. If the mother takes notice that the girl no longer gets her monthly, she gives her a tea of culantrillo, chukürí, and parra sylvestre; or if a girl is old enough and has not yet taken sick, her mother gives her tea of kudün amun [unidentified]." Quoting a woman in her eighties: "I know that the Mapuche mothers did not instruct their daughters. Now that I am getting old, I have often told young mothers to tell their 14- and 15-year-old girls about it. When a girl does not know what has happened to her, she worries and dries up inside. It was a Chilean girl who told me about it when I was young; I had worried much. She said all women had it; when I knew that, I stopped worrying."

There are no taboos regarding eating off dishes used by a menstruating woman; nor is it believed that men's clothing will be contaminated if left in her presence.

Children by themselves and among themselves are modest. Their presence at births—those of brothers and sisters only—however, would hardly meet the standards of modesty set for children of our culture. The only schoolchildren who had not been present at a birth were the youngest in the family, who therefore had had no opportunity of being present, or those who were too young to remember when a younger brother or sister had been born. When they were questioned, it was noted that children younger than 11 years promptly stood up to signify that they had witnessed a birth—the youngest child in the room, a 5-year-old boy, was the first to rise—but several of the boys and girls 14 and 15 years old seemed embarrassed; they delayed standing up, and then did so reluctantly. One boy pointed at his cousin and said, "He should get up, too; I know he was there." The boy then rose. Schoolchildren—girls more often than boys—had also been present at machitun, ceremonials performed over nude adult sick persons. Five had attended one in 1946.

10: Hilger E-5 (1946-1952) 1957
SG4 Araucanians SG4
Argentina



881 then gave me some nice clothes. I was 15 years old then. No, I was not given any herbal decoctions." Several informants spoke of a girl's voice changing about the time of her first menses.

841 There were no taboos regarding the use of dishes by menstruating women. "No one ever used anyone else's dishes at any time; everyone in the family had his own plate or bowl, and spoon. And each one knew his own, because his mark was engraved on his own, such as a bird or a tree, or some such mark." She continued, "My mother was right: it ended before I was 50 years old. I had my last child when I was 44. Soon after that I had irregular periods, hot spells, was dizzy always, my teeth ached; but all this ended too."

Of a menstruating woman it is said, "She experiences the moon." Of a woman past menopause it is said, "She no longer experiences the moon."

## ADULT BEHAVIOR

### CARE OF THE HAIR, BATHING, PERSONAL ADORNMENTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCE

302 A low hairline, an Araucanian trait, was not desired; neither was facial hair. Ashes, "any ashes from the fireplace," were rubbed on a boy's face to keep him from having facial hair. A considerable growth of hair on the forehead was removed by smearing either dough or flour mixed with water, or a paste of blood and ashes, over the forehead, letting it dry, and then rubbing it back and forth, thus pulling out the hair—a process called "cleaning the forehead" (liftun-tol). If there were only single hairs, they were jerked out with the fingers, or with a finger and the help of an implement, like a stone. Baldness [145] occurred when a man reached 100 or more years of age. "My father was 130 years old, so old that he lost all his hair."

515 The hair is washed when bathing. A lather of leaves of chacay [824] is used in place of soap, as formerly, especially by those who cannot afford soap. If a luster is desired, the hair, when dry, is saturated with several-days-old urine, an act called küllaitun. Bathing is done in creeks, rivers, or lakes. Many persons bathe daily.

302 A hairbrush was made from the roots of "a plant that grows on trees." The roots were wound about with narrow strips of bark to form a handle; the other ends of the plant were used in brushing. Such a brush in the collections of Parque Nacional de Lanín (specimen No. 77) is 14 inches long and 6 inches in circumference at brush end.

301 Formerly, every adult person wore silver ornaments. These were earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings, and studdings on belts. Women